GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TEXTILES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5205
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2000
USE OF JUTE BAGS
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Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have Notified that foodgrains and sugar are compulsorily required to be packed 100% in Jute Bags since May, 1987 till date except for a brief period of March 31, 2000 to October 24, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the Jute Bags being used are not of Food-Grade Jute Bags;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for allowing health hazardous Jute Bags containing JuteBatching Oil, to be compulsorily used for domestic consumption and Food-Grade-Jute Bags for foreign consumption; and

(d) the steps being taken to ensure that Non-Food-Grade-Jute -Bags are not allowed to pack edible items ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TEXTILES(SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR)

a) Government of India issued an order dated 29.05.1987 under Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 making it compulsory w.e.f. from 1.6.1987 for packing of 100% production of both foodgrains and sugar in Jute Packaging Materials. This compulsory packing of 100% productions of both foodgrain and sugar by Jute Packaging Materials has been continuing since 1.6.1987 till date. However, for a brief period from 31.3.2000 to 24.10.2000, compulsory packing by Jute Packaging Material was reduced to 90% of the production of the both foodgrain and sugar.

b) Jute bags used for compulsory packaging of both foodgrain and sugar were in conformity to Bureau of Indian Standard`s Specification. The jute bags confirming to relevant BIS Standards, used in the packing of foodgrains & sugar, have no reported adverse effects on human health.

c) Jute Batching Oil (JBO) a particular grade of petroleum byproduct, has been used almost throughout the world for processing of raw jute for manufacturing jute bags. There is no conclusive evidence of any correlation with a specific health hazard. The odourless hydrocarbon free jute bags using vegetable oil derivatives as Batching Oil has been named as foodgrade jute bags by International Jute Organisation (IJO)and it is now IJO STANDARD 98/01IOCCC (Intt. Organisation on Coffee, Cocoa & Chocolate) has suggested some changes and the same are awaiting approval of IJC. These bags are exported for packing of selected commodities like Cocoa Beans, Coffee Beans and Shelled Nuts.Currently Indian Export of odourless hydrocarbon free jute bags is around 10-15,000 MT per year out of total jute goods export of around 1.8 lakh MT.

d) JBO processed jute bags have not been conclusively proved to be health hazard. It would however be possible to supply hydrocarbon free jute bags to any consumer on demand.